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THE CYNEWULFIAN RUNES OF THE FIRST RIDDLE.

It seems a flat contradiction to assert that no lines in Old English poetry have received more frequent attention than the verses in which Cynewulf has preserved his name, and to affirm in the same breath that the treatment of these runic acrostics has been wholly inadequate to their importance. And yet the second statement is as true as the first. The many scholars who have discussed the name-passages have largely neglected the chief aids to their proper interpretation, riddle usage and runic custom. By an appeal to such evidence as these freely furnish, I shall now seek to reveal the hitherto hidden presence of Cynewulf's runic signature in a logogriph which the consensus of scholarly opinion has long since withdrawn not only from the category of his works but even from the list of enigmas; and, in a second article, to establish the author's close regard for the traditional connotation of the symbols which he so dexterously introduces into his four religious poems.

In regard to the methods of early poets wishing to embalm their names in the amber of runic acrostics, that laborious pioneer in the study of runes, Olaus Wormius, proves a valuable witness. "It has long been the custom of authors," he tells us in his pompous Latin,¹ "to insert into their poems by means of logogriphs or enigmatic letters, either their own names or those of their friends." Ole straightway produces an "exemplum Danicum" in illustration of this logogriphic doctrine. But the example is not Danish at all, as the language and metre (*sextánmælt*) demonstrate; but the work of an Icelander and is rightly attributed by Jón Thorkelsson² to Ole's helpful correspondent, Magnus Ólafsson (1573-1636), who intended it to occupy a place among the congratulatory effu-

sions at the head of the volume. Thorkelsson's quotation of this acrostic from the *Arna-Magn.*, 148, 8vo., is, of course, far superior to Worm's inaccurate version :-

Höll laxa, flóð fjalla,
Fold kát, skýja grátur,
Ymers ljós, úrkoma,
Ágæt svana kæti,
Ok jórs, og dufts auki
Etter skrifað verk setti,
Ýtar sjá hálærðs heiti
Her doktors skráð vera.

Hall of salmon, flood of fell = óss, lögr = O l
Field gay, cloud's weeping = ár, úr = a u
Ymer's light, come-down = sól, úr = s U
Excellent swans' joy (river) = óss = o
Yoke of steed, dust's increase = reið, maðr = r m.
(Here)-after written work composed.
Men see the name of the highlearned
Doctor to be written here.

Worm follows this with another runic acrostic, "logogryphus generis Dróttkvætt attmælt" upon his name (*Olaf Uorm*). This is also by Ólafsson and is also preserved in the *Arna-Magn.*

Now these logogriphs of Ólafsson's represent an Icelandic tradition which can be traced back to the fifteenth century at least. Thorkelsson's book is rich in logogriphs of exactly the same or similar types as the Wormian ones. I quote two of these with Mr. Magnússon's renderings.

Ormr Loftsson wrote about 1460 a cycle of *Rímur* of "Vílmundur víðutan," which he dedicated to a lady named "Sofia." At the end of the sixteenth *ríma* he introduces by means of runes (or rather synonyms for them), her name and his own in the following manner (Thorkelsson, p. 274) :-

Veraldar prýði og veglegt ár,
Verða mót við græði,
Auðurinn nógur og ísinn blár
Eignast máttu kvæði.

Vegleg hvíld og vatna mót,
Virða gamnið blíða,³
Grátur skýja og ferðin fljót
Ferju Hárs nam smíða.

¹ See *Literatura Runica*, Copenhagen, 1651, Appendix, pp. 169 f.

² *Om Digtingen på Island i det 15 og 16 Århundrede*, Copenhagen, 1888, pp. 469-470. For this valuable reference I am indebted to that eminent kenner of all things Scandinavian, Eiríkr Magnússon of Cambridge, England. His, too, are the excellent English interpretations of all the Icelandic logogriphs that I shall cite.

³ "I suspect that we ought to read: Virða gamni blíða, dat = hinu blíða gamni virða, i. e., the lady Sofia: viro-rum blando oblectamento naviculam Hari fabricavi" (Magnússon).

World's glory [sol] and stately year [ár], S a
 ↓
 Meetings (of rivers) happen at the sea [óss] o
 ↓ ↑
 Wealth enough [fé] and the ice blue [íss], f → i
 You may have the poem.
 Stately ease (car) [reið] and waters' meet [óss], r ← O
 ↓
 Men's delight blithe [maðr], m
 ↓
 Weeping of clouds [úr] and journey quick [reið] u → r.
 Did fashion Har's (the Dwarf's) ferry = the poem.

Hallr prestr Ögmundsson, who resigned his living of Stad in Steingrimsfjörður, 1539, presumably on account of old age, composed a religious poem called *Náð*, i. e., "Mercy on Anna and Mary," in 110 stanzas. In the 104th he hides his own and a friend's (Biörn's) names as follows (Thorkelsson, p. 320) :—

Orma kauor [= kör] með ári vörmu,
 Aurriða grund er hvergi bundinn,
 Tjörn og skúr má telja einnin,
 Tiguleg ferð hefir drápu gerða
 Auðling bað [mig] Ásgarðs stuðla,
 Unnar skjól og eð þraungva vólað,
 Vala erfiði og vegleg selja
 Vessa skyldi eg um kvinnu þessa.

Snakes' sickbed [hagl] with a warm year [ár], H a
 The char's land (haunt) [lögr] is nowhere bound, l
 Tarn [lögr] and shower [úr] may also be counted, l u
 Stately journey [reið] has made the drapa. r.
 Favorite of Asgarth's stays (the gods) [áss? or óss?], o³
 Wave's shelter [íss] and pressing misery [nauð], i² n⁵
 Vals' [= horses'] toil [reið] and stately willow [bjarkan] r⁴ B¹
 Bade me make verses on this lady.

Thorkelsson cites many other runic acrostics of equal interest: the *Ignatius kvæði pislavotts* of the sixteenth century, "Olifr," i. e., "Olafr" (p. 85); the last of the anonymous *Skald-Helga-Rímur*, "Tumas" (p. 134); Olafr [Kolbeinson's] poem on Mary Magdalene, the author's name (p. 321); Thorðr Magnússon of Strjúgur in the last of his *Rollants Rímur*, the author's name backwards (p. 345), and in the *Heilræða-Ríma*, the name "Illugi(-e)" (p. 349); and finally Olafr Thomasson (d. 1595), in the last strophe of his memorial poem on Bishop Jón Arason, the author's name (p. 390). More recent even than

these are the runic acrostics of the *rímur* writers cited by Gollancz in his interesting volume, *Hamlet in Iceland* (1898). As this scholar has duly noted,⁴ the modern Icelandic rune-play suggests the signatures in Cynewulf's spiritual poems. One *ríma*, indeed, in its combination of acrostic and charade, is so very much to the purpose of the present article that several lines must be quoted. In the twenty-fourth number of the *Bálants eða Feracuts Rímur* by Guðmundr (1701),⁵ the poet thus preserves his name and that of his patron, Arnljotur :—

Árferð, vinda agg og lögur,
 ís yfir skarði landa,
 týr, úr, reið, sá beiddi umbögur
 brjotur kennist landa.

Valdráður og vífa fé
 etc.

Ár(A); ferð = reið(r); vinda agg = nauð(n), lögur(l)
 ís(i); skarði landa = ós(o)
 týr(t); úr(u); reið(r)

Valdráður(= Guð); vífa fé(mundr)

Mr. Magnússon believes that this Icelandic runic tradition may go back to Cynewulf himself and quotes a remarkable passage in the oldest grammatical treatise in the Icelandic language, about 1140 A. D.,⁶ which seems to show that by the middle of the twelfth century there were in Iceland books written in Anglo-Saxon and understood by some Icelanders.⁷ It is in any case, un-

⁴ *Hamlet in Iceland*, pp. lxxvii, lxxxi-lxxxii.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 283-284.

⁶ "And yet Englishmen write the English with Latin letters, all such as suit the sounds in the English (tongue), but where they do not suffice they employ other letters, as many and of such a kind as are required, but the others they discard which do not suit the sounds of their language. Now, after their example, since we (i. e., Icelanders and Englishmen) are of one tongue (speak one and the same tongue), though one of the two may have changed much or both to some extent . . . I have also written for us Icelanders an alphabet . . ." ("Snorra Edda," *Arna-Magn*, ed. II, 12, 10.)

⁷ To sustain this point Mr. Magnússon points to the Icelandic labors of eleventh-century missionary bishops from England like Bernhard the Bookwise and Hróþólf, the cousin of Edward the Confessor (see Ari, *Islandínga-bók*,

deniable that there is a close connection between the Old English rune-song on the one hand and the Norwegian and Icelandic runic-poems on the other.⁸

I have no inclination to press the argument of direct literary relation between the Old English and Icelandic logogriphs. Whether or not Cynewulf's acrostics influenced the Northern tradition is not of great moment. One thing, however, becomes clear in the light of the Scandinavian illustrations of runic method—and here we have made an important step in advance—that, in typical runic acrostics, the rune was so obviously associated with a definite naming-word, that, at the sight of the name or its synonym, the reader immediately supplied the symbol, or conversely, at the sight of the symbol, substituted the set name. Cynewulf, in his runic acrostics, was doubtless following a conventional scheme popular among poets and familiar to the readers of his time.

In the name-passages of his religious poems, Cynewulf pursued the method of suggesting the letter-name (*Cēn* or *Wyn* or *Lagu*, as the case might be) by the runic symbol, but there are very strong indications that he employed at least once the traditional Icelandic device of substituting for the letter its name or some synonym of its name. The application of this scheme to the so-called "First Riddle" produces such illuminating results that I am led to the conclusion that scholars have been hasty in taking this puzzling poem out of the rank of enigmas and in putting it in the category of *The Husband's Message* and *The Wife's Complaint*. The guise of the lyrical monologue it certainly has, but it seems also to bear the stamp of Cynewulf's cipher.⁹

ch. 8; "Hungryvaka" *Biskupasögur*, I, 64-65; Appendix to the "Landnáma," *Íslendingasögur*, I, 332), [see Taranger, *Den Angelsaksiske Kirkes Indflydelse paa den Norske*, Christiania, 1890, pp. 166, 172, 182-188], and to the Icelandic knowledge of the *Beowulf* in the *Grettissaga*, which "seems to draw from the written Anglo-Saxon book, not from oral tradition." This belief in a direct literary connection between the two works is not shared by Anglists (cf. Brandl, *Paul's Grundriss*², I, 995-996).

⁸ Wimmer, *Die Runenschrift*, 1887, pp. 83, 281.

⁹ It is apposite to note here the kinship in motif between the "Reed" riddle (No. 61), which is surely an ampli-

Before we proceed to an analysis of the First Riddle, let me make clear one or two features of logogriphic usage. Leo's interpretation of the poem¹⁰ was doubly at fault: it was far-fetched and fanciful, marked, too, by a total ignorance of riddle-methods; it was moreover, as Sievers showed,¹¹ linguistically impossible, since *cyne*, *cēne*, *cēn* and *cwēn* could not interchange. But it does not therefore follow that another interpretation which pursues closely a traditional scheme and commits no linguistic absurdities is inapt. The poem, whether by coincidence or no (and the chances are enormous against a merely accidental concurrence of so many elements), may easily be read as a cryptogram like the runic *rīma* of Guðmundr (*supra*), combining acrostic and charade. Both were very popular at this time: Aldhelm, Tatwine and Boniface delighted in the one¹²; the vogue of the other is established by Æthelwald's *priscus cassis* for Aldhelm ("Ita cassis per culmina prisci splendent præfulgida," etc.),¹³ and by Æthelwulf's self-title, *Clarus lupus* ("Hæc lupus, alte pater, stolido de pectore clarus," etc.)¹⁴ Acrostic and charade are combined in a tenth-century poem at the close (78 b) of the Bodleian ms. Rawlinson C. 697:—

*Archalis clamare triumphum nomine Saxi
Dive tuo fors prognossum feliciter ævo
Augustæ. Samu cernentis rupis eris el h
Larvales forti beliales robure contra
Sæpe seges messem fecunda prenotat altum in
Tutis solandum petrinum solibus agmen
Amplius amplificare sacra sophismatis arce
Nomina orto petas donet precor inclita doxus.*¹⁵

fication of Symposius (No. 2), and *The Husband's Message*, which follows it in the *Exeter Book*. Indeed, all "first person" verse riddles are lyrical monologues.

¹⁰ *Que de se ipso Cynewulfus Poeta Anglo-Saxonius tradiderit*, 1857.

¹¹ *Anglia*, XIII, 19-21.

¹² Cf. R. Ehwald, *De Aenigmatibus Aldhelmi et Acrostichis*, Gotha, 1905; my edition of *The Exeter Book Riddles*, 1910, pp. xxxi, xxxiii, xlv.

¹³ Jaffé, *Bibliotheca*, 1866, III, 46. See Lingard's *History of the Anglo-Saxon Church*, 1845, II, 188.

¹⁴ *De Abbatibus, etc.*, xxxiii, 1, *Poetae Latini Aevi Carolini*, I, 603.

¹⁵ I cite the manuscript note of "Bodley's librarian," Mr. E. W. B. Nicholson, in the Bodleian copy of *Cata-*

Both enigmatic modes were familiar to Cynewulf. He uses the acrostic in the *Christ*, the *Elene*, the *Fates*; he employs the charade in the *Juliana*, and perhaps in the Latin enigma, *Rid.* 90, if we accept the ingenious interpretation of the Erlemanns.¹⁶ Indeed in the *Juliana* passage he, like the Anglo-Saxon Johannes, welds the two devices together by regarding *CYN* and *EWU* as word-groups and *L*, *F*, as runic symbols.¹⁷ Hence there is nothing inherently improbable in the supposition that once again he combined acrostic and charade—working, in his presentation of the runes of his name, not counter to, but quite in accord with, runic tradition, as we meet it elsewhere.

Now let us apply the Icelandic method to the First Riddle. The requirements of space make it necessary to transfer the tabular view into the next column:—

logue of *Rawlinson MSS. C*, p. 351, where this acrostic has been printed:—"The writer of these verses at the end is 'Johannis,' certainly an Anglo-Saxon, and he addresses 'Adalstan,' Bishop of London ('Augustæ'), who is to be a 'rupis' against ghostly enemies. He wrote them between 970 and 981. . . . As *saxi* = *stān*, so *archalis* = *adal*."

¹⁶ *Herrigs Archiv*, cxi, 59 f., cxv, 391 f. Cf. my notes, *Exeter Book Riddles*, pp. 230-232. The solution of the Latin enigma hinges upon the adequate interpretation of its second line, "Obcurrit agnus [rupi] et capit viscera lupi," which is doubly cryptic. As I have shown (*l. c.*), it has a spiritual signification. The Lamb, Christ, through the Rock, Peter (*Matt.* xvi, 18), destroys the Wolf, the Devil. But there is a personal allusion as well. Edmund Erlemann has well explained the "Agnus . . . capit viscera lupi" as a reference to the relation of *ewu* and *wulf* in Cynewulf's name; but neither he nor his fellows have interpreted the "Obcurrit agnus [rupi]," not realizing that the inserted word is demanded by the exigencies of medial rime. Only one explanation seems possible. In the name, *Cynewulf*, *ewu* meets *cyn* . . . *ƿ*, which by a favorite form of inversion of letters (cf. *Fates*, *Rid.* 25, and my solution of *Rid.* 1), becomes *clƿn*—quite near enough to *clif* (frequently glossing 'rupes') for the word-play of a riddler, who was certainly not writing for twentieth-century philologists.

¹⁷ These runes will be discussed in my second article.

Leod = *Cyn*
hƿ = *Cyn* *hine*, *hē* = *Wulf*
Wulf *ic* = *Cyn* (?)
Cyn *Wulf*
rēn = *Lagu* (?)
beaduſa = *Cene* (C)

Leodum is minum swylce him mon lāc gife:
 willað hƿ hine āþeegan, gif hē on þrēat cymeð.
 Uſgelic is ſi.
 Wulf is on iegel, ic on ðperre;
 5 feaſt is þet eƿlonð fenne biworpan,
 sindon weðrōne weras þær on ige:
 willað hƿ hine āþeegan, gif hē on þrēat cymeð.
 Uſgelice is ſi.
 Wulfes ic mines wiðlaſtum wēnum hogode;
 10 þonne hit was rēnig weðer and ic rēotugu sæt,
 þonne meec ſe beaduſa hōgum bliegde:
 was mē wƿn tō þon, was mē hweþre ēac lāð.
 [Min] wulf, min wulf, wēna mē þine
 ſēce geƿdon, þine ſeldcymas,
 15 munrende mōð, nāles meteliste.
 Geħyrest þū, Eadwacer? Uſcerne earne hweðp
 biceð wulf tō wuda.
 þet mon eaþe tōſlitleð þette nēfre geſomnad was,
 uſcer gielded geador.

lāc = *Feah* (F)
þrēat = *Nȳd* (N)
ēg, i. e. *ēa* = *Lagu* (L)
weðrōne = *Cene* (C) (?)
Nȳd (N)
hōg = *boga* = *ƿr* (Y)
wƿn, *wēn* = *W*
Uſcerne = *Ũr* (U)

All phases of charade and acrostic must now be discussed. The keystone of the problem is the poem's second line exactly as in the Latin Riddle (*Rid.* 90). They (*Leod* or *Cyn*) will oppress him (*Wulf*), if he comes to want or need (*þrēat* or *Nȳd*)—that is, *Cyn* will oppress or press upon¹⁸

¹⁸ Grein (*Sprachschatz*, I, 45) translates *āþeegan* as "receive," Bradley (*Academy*, March 24, 1888) as "give food to"; but the rendering of Schofield (*PMLA.*, xvii, 266) and Imelmann (*Die Altenglische Odoaker-Dichtung*, 1907, p. 16) "oppress" is supported by other forms of *þeegan*. Significant indeed is the likeness to *tribulantes* in the fourth line of the Latin enigma (*Rid.* 90), "duo lupi

Wulf, if the syllable comes to *N*, the last letter of *Cyn*. The line is so important that the poet repeats it a few lines later. Rieger¹⁹ long since recognized the propriety of substituting for *Lēod* the first syllable of the name of *Cynwulf* (the form here as in *Christ* and *Fates*). There can be no doubt that *hine* and *hē* refer to *Wulf*, who has probably been mentioned in a line now missing.²⁰ In its frequent meaning of "compulsion," "distress," *þrēat* (see B. T., s. v.) is an adequate synonym of *Nýd* (*N*), just as *þraungva vólað* is of *Nauð* (*N*) in Hallr's Icelandic acrostic. The unusual expression, *on þrēat cuman*, finds therefore its explanation in the needs of the enigma, not in an untenable theory of Old Norse origin.²¹

stantes et tertium tribul[antes].'' According to Götzen's postscript to the Erlmann solution (*Herrigs Archiv*, cxi, 63), 'two letters of the name, *Wulf*, oppress or press upon a third.'

¹⁹ *ZfdP.*, i, 215-219.

²⁰ That a line is lacking seems attested by the need of an antecedent for the pronouns, by the absence of *Wulf* from this division of the poem and from no other, and perhaps, though the strophic structure is more than doubtful (see *infra*), by the shortness of the first strophe. This Bradley, Schofield, and Lawrence recognized.

²¹ The use of strophe and refrain, if we may in any way speak of a "strophe," when the so-called "refrain" *Ungeþic(e) is ūs*, is more closely associated in thought with the following than with the preceding lines, is no more indicative of an Old Norse origin of our poem than the *fornyrðislag* strophe of the Bee Spell (*Bibl.*, i, 319) or the twice repeated refrain in the spirited Charm against the shots of Witches (*Bibl.*, i, 317), *Ūt, lýtel spere, gif hēr inne sīe!* By the aid of such arguments as Lawrence and Schofield employ to prove a Scandinavian source for the First Riddle (*PMLA.*, xvii, 247, 262), it would be very easy to show that the Witch Charm is Norse. If the aliteration of *w . . . hw* (*Rid.* 1¹²) points, as Lawrence thinks, to the carelessness of a translator, how shall we explain its appearance elsewhere in the Riddles (7ⁱ, *Leid.* 11; cf. *Gu.*, 323, *Beow.*, 2299, *Jud.* 249), and what shall we say to the many metrical irregularities of the Witch Charm? *Ēsa* (Witch Charm, ll. 23, 25), a *hapaxlegomenon* in Anglo-Saxon, points, in its meaning of "god," far more directly to the Scandinavian (cf. the frequent *áss*, "god") than *īeg* (*īg*) which appears in so many Old English compounds and place-names; *ylfā gescot* (Witch Charm, ll. 23, 25) which appears elsewhere in the *Charms*, is not less Norwegian (here let one lay undue stress upon the *aliskudt* of modern Norway!) than the thoroughly English idiom (*Rid.* 1¹²), *wæs mē wyn tō þon* (cf. *And.*, 1113, 1162, *wæs hīm tō māðme* (*ðsle*) *wyn*; *Seaf.* 45, *nē tō wīfe wyn*; *Gu.*, 189 *tō þon eald-ēondas ondan nūmon*); and the suggestion of "wild hunts"

Into the fourth line of the poem *Leo* long since read a "Cynewulf" charade by the quite inadmissible substitution of *cwēn* (= *ic*) for *cyn*; and several of the scholars with whom I have discussed my interpretation seem inclined to believe that a charade is still possible here, if we regard *ic* as identified with *cyn* by the opening clause of the enigma, *Lēodum is minnum*. If such identification is permissible, then it is but an easy step to the early view that "the two islands" refer to the two syllables of the poet's name. So much for the charade at present.

Now for the acrostic, which, in the light of the repeated keyline, becomes clear. Just as in the Icelandic acrostic (*supra*), Hallr gives Biörn's name as *OINRB*; so Cynewulf follows in the *Fates* the order, *FWULCYN*, and here he prefers *FNLCYWU*. As in the *Fates*, "*Feoh þær on ende standeþ*"; and the letter-name finds a fitting synonym in *lāc* (with *lāc gife* compare *feoh-gift*, which appears threetimes in the *Beowulf*, 21, 1025, 1089). *Nýd* (*N*) has already been explained. *Ēglond* may have read originally *Ēalond* (the two forms are found side by side in *Whale*, 12, 16, 21, and Deutschbein²² notes that *ēalond* is the invariable form in the Anglian *Beda*) to suggest more readily, through the first member of the compound, the desired rune-name, *Lagu* (*L*), but the likeness is not in any case far to seek (cf. *ēgstrēam*, "water," "sea").²³ The iden-

of Woden and of a *Hǫvmól* charm against Witches (cf. Grendon, *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, xxii, 214) is certainly as strong in the one as the hint of the *Volsungasaga* in the other. If such arguments are permitted to carry the least weight, what shall we say to the striking "strophes" and "refrains" of the Nine Herbs Charm (*Bibl.*, i, 320) and of its references to Woden and the slaying of the serpent that recall the *Völuspá*, 55, 56? Are the *Exeter Gnomes* Norse because they abound in short verses and strophic paragraphs and because the *Eddas* furnish a dozen striking analogues to their maxims? The theory of translation takes no account of the persistence in Anglo-Saxon of very old Germanic traditions and modes of expression, and is as futile as the recent attempt to assign an Old-Saxon origin to portions of the *Christ*.

²² *Paul u. Braune's Beiträge*, xxvi, 224.

²³ As, in *Rid.* 4³⁸, "rain" finds its poetical equivalent in *lagustrēama*, it is barely possible that Cynewulf is stressing by repetition the *L*-rune (as he repeats for effect *N*, *W*, and *U*) when he writes (line 10) the not very apposite *rēnig weder*.

tification of *walrēowe* as *cēne* was the work of Leo, who quite inadmissibly regarded *cēne* as the first syllable of the poet's name (*cēne* = *cyn*) and not as the name of the *C*-rune, in which sense it is found in the *Christ*, the *Elene*, the *Fates*; but *beaducāfa* (l. 11) is a far better synonym of *Cēne* (*C*) than *walrēowe*. The rune *Y* the poet found less adaptable. It was no easy thing to hide away in his monologue so irrelevant a word as *ȳr*, "bow" or any of its synonyms. He got bravely over this difficulty by a bit of word-play. Just as the *Exeter Book* riddler plays upon *weg* and *wēg* (*Rid.* 69^{1,3}) or upon the two meanings of *wong* (32¹⁴), *blād* (38⁷), *hæft* (73²²) and *blace* (93²²), so *bōgum* (*bōg*) is intended to suggest *boga* = *ȳr* (*Y*). The difficult letter is treated in quite another fashion in the three acrostics (*Christ*, *Elene*, *Fates*), but more of that in my second article. The two remaining runes gave Cynewulf little trouble. Both names of the *W*-rune, *Wyn*, *Wen*²⁴ appear in lines 9, 12, 13,—indeed the second furnishes a *leitmotif* to this division of the poem. And *Ūr* (*U*) is twice presented through its equivalent *uncer(ne)* (lines 16, 19). It is significant that Cynewulf employs here the same connotation of the *U*-rune, as in his religious poems. In the last two lines of the lyric we have an obvious reference to the enigmatic purpose of the writer.²⁵

Now even the skeptical, hampered though they are by absolute ignorance of the ways of riddlers, will admit that the chances are prodigiously against this cryptogram being accidental. That the application of a thoroughly accredited enigmatic method to this obscure little poem should reveal the runes (and those only) that compose

²⁴ Sievers has shown conclusively (*Anglia*, XIII, 3-4) that, in Anglo-Saxon poetry (not only in *Rid.* 91⁷, but in *El.* 1090, 1264; *Civ.* 805; *Fates* 100; *Run.* 8) *W* always demands the interpretation *wyn*, a rendering of the rune sustained by the Anglo-Saxon alphabet in the Salzburg MS. (Wimmer, *Runenschrift*, p. 85). On the other hand, *wēn* is the letter's name in many runic alphabets (Stephens, *Runic Monuments*, I, 99, II, 830).

²⁵ Merbot, *Aesthetische Studien zur angelsächsischen Poesie*, p. 26, in his discussion of the various meanings of *gied*, points out that in *Rid.* 56¹⁴, *gieddes*, the word means "a riddle," and compares the *Exeter Gnomes*, 4, *glēawe men sceolon gieddum wrizlan*. Perhaps there is a similar implication here. In any case, there is no need to change *giedd* to *gæd* with Herzfeld and Schofield.

the name of the very author who elsewhere discloses his identity by runic devices can hardly be explained on any other theory than that of literary design. Add to this that the poem contains also a charade cloaking the name of this writer, who has attested in the *Juliana* his fondness for charades—and the interpretation seems indeed strongly intrenched.

To this logographic explanation there are certain very obvious objections. And yet some of the strongest of these may be easily converted into favorable arguments. For instance, the striking sentence, *Uncerne earne hwelp / bireð wulf tō wuda* (16-17) must do more than merely introduce a *U*-rune. Its place near the end of the poem and the implication of the enigma's closing lines lead me to believe that it is a phase of the charade. The word *hwelp* may perhaps be regarded as a synonym of the common "progenies," connotation of *cyn*; though I am not aware that *cyn* is ever limited to a single offspring. Grant to the exigencies of a riddle the possibility of such a substitution; and the meaning becomes, "*Wulf* bears our *Cyn* to the wood"; or simply "*Wulf* carries away *Cyn*," since the association of wolf and wood is conventional.²⁶ But how explain *Ēadwacer*? All efforts to account for that mysterious person have been vain. Leo's attempt to interpret the name as an equivalent of the vowel *E* cannot be made to square with the invariable synonym of *E*, *Eh* or *Eoh*, "horse," and moreover falls completely with the abandonment of the *cēne* (= *cyn*) interpretation of *wuda*. Schofield's effort to define the word as "a translation of an Old Norse epithet, *Auðvagr*, i. e., 'The Easily (or Very) Vigilant One' "²⁷ is ruled out by the spuriousness of the ostensibly Norse coinage and by the appearance of the name *Ēadwacer* at least twice in Old English²⁸; and Imelmann's more recent ascription of the poem to an *Odoacer* cycle comprising also *The Wife's Complaint* and *The Husband's Message* collapses with his failure to interpret as *Ēadwacer* the runes at the end of the last-named lyric.²⁹

²⁶ Cf. *Judith*, 206, *Brunanburh*, 65, *wulf in (on) walde*; *Cotton Gnomes* 18, *wulf sceal in bearwe*; *Elene* 113, *wulf, holtes gehlēpa*.

²⁷ *PMLA.*, XVII, 267.

²⁸ Cf. Searle, *Onomasticon*, p. 189; Bradley, *Athenaeum*, 1902, II, 758.

²⁹ Cf. Bradley, *Modern Language Review*, II, 365-368.

Eadwacer, in my opinion, plays in the poem no rôle of "swift whelp" or of cuckoldy husband,³⁰ nor has he apparently aught to do with the historical *Odoacer*, of whom, as Nutt rightly says,³¹ there is no trace in England; but he is merely the friend to whom the poet addresses his enigma—some Anglo-Saxon Postumus or Lollius.

Though our Anglo-Saxon cryptogram has so much in common with the Icelandic name-poems, there is one very obvious difference between them. In the Icelandic *rímur* the synonyms of the runes fill the text to the exclusion of other ideas; in the English enigma the equivalents of the letter-names are skilfully woven into the story of the poem. Such, however, is Cynewulf's method. His other acrostics amply attest his cleverness in inserting runes into his verse without checking the flow of thought. This ingenuity does not fail him here.

For his cryptic purposes Cynewulf chose a form of poetic expression common in his day, the lyrical monologue, and wove his name into a little story of a woman's love, which may or may not have been familiar to his hearers; but it is evident that, in the opening lines, in the frequent reference to *Wulf*, in the constant selection of words and even motifs adapted to charade and acrostic, and in the riddling close, the enigma has gained at the expense of the lay. Viewed merely as a lyrical monologue, the poem is enveloped in obscurities which are in striking contrast to the simplicity of other compositions of this sort, and which seem to suggest hidden meanings. Regarded as a logograph, the verses are easy to interpret, since the hint of *Cyn* given in the first word of the poem is reinforced by the mention of *Wulf* in every division; and since both syllables are immediately brought together in a key-line (ll. 2, 7). After the charade has thus furnished all clues, the tracing of the acrostic becomes an exercise not beyond the ingenuity of readers accustomed to this kind of diversion.

In closing may I be permitted a few words in

regard to the bearing of this acrostic-charade upon the important question of the authorship of the Riddles of the *Exeter Book*? In my very recent edition of these poems I thus summarized a detailed discussion of the subject³²: "Not much value can be attached to any single variation [in the text of the *Riddles*] from Cynewulf's usage or indeed to the accumulative force of all that have been cited; but, in the absence of one jot of evidence connecting the *Riddles* with this poet, these differences add slightly to the heavy burden of proof resting upon him who seeks to revive the moribund claim of Cynewulfian authorship." Now all is changed. The proper interpretation of the "Cynwulf" cryptogram shifts the burden of proof to the shoulders of him who endeavors to show that this collection of poems, in the main homogeneous,³³ was not (with a few exceptions) the work of Cynewulf. Certainly the effort to assign the enigmas to an earlier period than that of the poet has been signally unsuccessful.³⁴ His name is written large in the very first riddle of them all (just as Aldhelm writes his in the introductory acrostic to his enigmas) and appears again towards the close of the collection. The undoubted variations in meter, language and style³⁵ from the usage in the generally accepted poems of Cynewulf are after all too slight to avail against the explicit evidence of the First Riddle and the substantiating testimony of Riddle 90. Belief in the poet's wide range of literary activity and of linguistic and metrical expression, and a consequent reconstruction of the Cynewulf canon are the inevitable conclusions resulting from an acceptance of my interpretation of the "Cynwulf" name-poem. Hence, the far-reaching significance of this attempt to lift forever from the First Riddle the ban of double terms and to restore it to its rightful place at the head of the *Exeter Book* enigmas.

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³⁰ The *þū* (l. 16) can only be *Ēadwacer*; and *uncerne*, like *uncer* below, must refer to the tie between the lady and *Wulf*, since *hwelp*, which *uncerne* qualifies, is only in point if used of the wolf-breed or -kin. Moreover, as Imelmann has pointed out (p. 17), *gehyrest þū* has the force of an interjection, *georsti*.

³¹ *Athenæum*, 1902, II, 587.

³² *Riddles of the Exeter Book*, p. lxii.

³³ In my Introduction to the *Riddles*, pp. lxiii-lxix, I have given at length my reasons for believing that by far the greater number of these enigmas are from a single hand.

³⁴ See *Riddles*, pp. lvi-lviii.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. lx-lxii.